some choice; in previous polls many members of parliament and even ministers have been rejected by the electorate. President Moi said he looked forward to being rid of corrupt and selfish ministers.

The confidence of Mr Moi, who came to power after the death of Jomo Kenyatta in 1978, was badly shaken by an attempted coup last August, in which hundreds of people were killed. It was led by junior air force men but proved to have support among some senior officers, students, professional men and (it was rumoured) people high in government.

The president has long had to put up with the quarrels between the two men who did most to bring him to power: Mr Njonjo and the vice-president, Mr Mwai Kibaki, who has more support among the powerful Kikuyu people (though Mr Njonjo is also a Kikuyu). Mr Moi is a mild man who comes from one of Kenya's minor ethnic groups. He has survived by maintaining a balance between political and tribal pressures. The run-up to the election will show whether his latest calculations—on the best way to deal with hyenas—are soundly based.

India

Too hot to handle

FROM OUR INDIA CORRESPONDENT

Parts of India's nuclear power plant at Tarapur, near Bombay, are said to be so contaminated that maintenance workers have to rush in, turn a nut a couple of times, and rush out. Even so, a worker can receive the permissible fortnightly dose of radiation in only 30 seconds. Some people have received an annual dose of radiation in 20 minutes. Workers from non-nuclear power plants, some of them unskilled, have been brought in to do maintenance jobs to try to reduce the amount of radiation received by the regular staff at Tarapur.

Disclosures of contamination at Tarapur, published in the Times of India and followed up by other Indian newspapers, have embarrassed the government. The chairman of the atomic energy commission, Mr Homi N. Sethna, told reporters on May 11th that almost all the figures published in the press were correct, but he refused to agree that this meant the plant was unsafe.

Radiation is measured in rem (röentgen equivalent man). According to the safety guidelines of the International Commission on Radiological Protection, the average level of radiation for the workforce at the Tarapur plant should not exceed 500 millirem (½ rem) a year. The press reports say this figure was exceeded in most years during the 1970s. In 1975 the figure was 3,311 millirem. The commission also recommends that no individual worker should receive more than 5,000 millirem in a year. In 1976 some luckless workers received 18,240 millirem.

Mr Sethna claimed that the limit of 5,000 millirem was on the low side and that a worker could tolerate 15,000 without undue risk. But observers believe it is astonishing that India should violate an international norm which it had accepted. If a separate Indian standard were laid down it should be a lower one, because Indians do not eat as well as westerners and are more susceptible to the effects of radiation. That is why the irradiation of foodstuffs for preservation is not permitted in India.

Since 1980 the amount of radiation measured at Tarapur has dropped dramatically and is now well within the safety limits. The government has claimed that Tarapur has been forced to work at half its capacity in recent years to conserve nuclear fuel, supplies of which were held back by the United States because of India's refusal to sign the 1968 nuclear non-proliferation treaty. It now appears that the real reason for the cutback is the high level of radiation that would occur if the plant were fully operated. The first French supplies of nuclear fuel have now arrived, but it was announced on May 17th that part of the plant is to be closed.

The Tarapur plant, built by General Electric of America and operational since 1969, has two boiling-water reactors. Water circulating through the reactor core carries radioactivity through the turbines and pipes, which have become increasingly contaminated. The Americans' reluctance to supply spare parts also extends to radiation-monitoring equipment.

India is paying a heavy price for the "peaceful" nuclear explosion it staged in 1974. That increased the international pressure for India to accept full-scope safeguards. Instead of accepting them, India decided to go it alone in nuclear power, using reactors which could be fuelled by natural uranium mined in India and thus avoiding dependence on the imported enriched uranium needed by reactors of the Tarapur type.

This bid for self-sufficiency has proved to be a disaster financially, and only a limited success technically. The building of several reactors is running far behind schedule. The nuclear power unit built in the north-western state of Rajasthan has generally worked at no more than 40% of capacity. The plant at Kalpakkam, near Madras, although virtually completed, cannot yet be commissioned for want of heavy water, because India's heavy-water plants are themselves behind schedule.

Australia and Kampuchea

Bowen's arrow

FROM OUR CANBERRA CORRESPONDENT

Australia's deputy prime minister was presumably in an expansive mood when he told a Labor party dinner on May 14th that Australia and Japan might get together to help solve the Kampuchea problem. Mr Lionel Bowen said, unexceptionably, that Australia should work for a withdrawal of the Vietnamese army from the country it occupied four and a half years ago, and free elections for the Kampucheans to determine their own future. This would involve, he added a bit more riskily, the disarming of the Khmer Rouge guerrillas who are the backbone of the fight against the Vietnamese. And, said Mr Bowen, jumping into the deep end, "we can play a role, with the Japanese perhaps, on the basis of a peacekeeping force to guarantee that happened."

In Tokyo, Japanese foreign-office officials, resuming work after the weekend and besieged by Australian journalists, took refuge in the Japanese constitution; they said it rules out sending troops abroad. In Hongkong, the Australian foreign minister, Mr Bill Hayden, on his way back from Europe, said it was the first he had heard of the idea. It seems clear that Mr Bowen was acting on his own: nobody is prepared to say that the notion had even been discussed in the government.

The problems in the way of any Japanese participation are formidable, not least the conviction of the Japanese government that it should do nothing to revive memories in south-east Asia of an earlier arrival of Japanese soldiers. The task of convincing the United Nations that it should back a peace force is equally formidable.

Was Mr Bowen letting his tongue run away with him, or was there something behind what he said? The Kampuchea dilemma is linked with the Vietnam aid problem. The Australian Labor party is committed to resuming aid to Vietnam, but Mr Hayden has found the south-east Asian states united in condemning such a move, and the United States would certainly dislike it. Mr Bowen may well have felt that shifting discussion to a peacekeeping force would deflect attention from the awkward question of what to do about Vietnam.

He may also have felt it would do no harm to tell the Japanese that they have international responsibilities. In the same speech he said that Japan "had taken us to the cleaners" over ownership and marketing of mineral resources (Japan i